

## **My Sister 53**

Chapter 53 TAKE MY PLACE

KIERAN'S POV

The hospital hallway reeked of antiseptic and dread. Every step toward Celeste's room felt like I was walking towards an execution—one I'd set up for myself.

The doctor's words still rang in my ears. "Her wolf is deteriorating rapidly. Any further emotional instability could cause irreversible damage. Don't provoke her."

I wanted to scream—not at the doctor, not at Ethan, not even at Celeste. At myself—at the storm inside my own damn chest.

Ethan walked silently beside me. His posture was stiff, wary, as if he knew I was barely holding on.

And gods, he had no fucking idea. He hadn't seen the way I'd nearly lunged for Lucian, hadn't heard the things I said to Seraphina. Words and actions that tasted like rusted regret now.

I forced those thoughts to the furthest crevice of my mind.

Celeste was more important than anything else right now. She was on the brink—and I was simultaneously the one who pushed her there and the only thing tethering her to the edge.

I braced myself before stepping into her room, feeling like I was stepping onto a battlefield of a war I was ill-equipped to fight.

She looked so fragile in the bed.

Apparently, she'd drank from a bottle of bleach a careless cleaner had left behind in her bathroom, and what had turned into an overnight stay because she fainted was now an indefinite admission.

They'd performed oral irrigation, and she was now attached to IV lines. The doctor assured us she was out of the woods and the worst thing we had to worry about was her mental state.

Her eyes fluttered open as we closed the door behind us, and a slow, tired smile spread on her lips—which, surprisingly, were glossy.

"Hey, sis," Ethan said softly, moving to her side.

I hesitated. The wires, the IV line, the oxygen tube—it was all too damn much.

"Kieran?" Ethan shot me a pointed look, and I forced myself to move. "Oh, gods, Celeste," I choked out, rushing to her side.

I gently sat on the edge of the bed. "You scared us. Why would you do that?" Try as I did, I couldn't keep the accusation out of my voice.

She turned away, staring at the wall by her bed. "I wasn't... I didn't think. I just wanted all the pain and heartache to stop."

Guilt curdled in my stomach like my own personal poison, and I gripped her hand gently, leaning down to kiss her forehead. "Celeste, I am so sorry you felt that way."

She stiffened.

Slowly, she turned her head back to me, disbelief blanketing her features. Her nose wrinkled as she took a delicate sniff and then—

"I don't believe this," she whispered.

I frowned. "What?"

"You were with her?"

I froze as rage filled her wide eyes.

“You left me last night and went to her, didn’t you?” Her voice shook with fury. “You’re coming from her right now, aren’t you?”

“Celeste—”

“Get the fuck away from me!” she hissed, shoving me with more force than she should have been able to muster. “You stink of her.”

Shit. Throwing my arms around Sera on the road; pressing her into the wall at her house. Of course, I now smelled like her.

Was there no end to all the ways I kept fucking up?

“Celeste—”

“If you’ve made your decision, Kieran—if you’ve chosen her, chosen to believe her lies, to throw me away—then don’t waste any more of your time. Just go. Let me die in peace.”

Her words sliced through me, cutting me in places I didn’t even know existed. It was one thing to watch the woman I was sure I loved wish for death; it was another thing to watch her wish for death because of me.

I didn't notice when he moved, but the soft click of the door told me Ethan had left the room.

"Stop," I said hoarsely. "Please don't talk like that, Celeste."

"I mean it. I meant it when I drank that damn bottle!"

I shook my head, her words carving a hole inside me. "No, please. I...I've never once considered throwing you away, Celeste."

She sobbed, angry tears welling up in her eyes. "Then why, Kieran? Why do you keep going back to her? Why does every-fucking-thing keep leading you back to her!"

I gritted my teeth as the wolf in her flared and shuddered beneath the surface. Her aura was flickering, jagged, and unstable.

I grappled for words to say, anything to make this all right, and I got nothing.

"I will not play second fiddle to my sister, Kieran," Celeste spat. "I never once did it my whole life, and I sure as hell won't start now."

I sat back down on her bed, and this time, she let me take her hand. "You're not second to anyone, Celeste," I said earnestly. "There's only you."

"I don't believe you," she whispered.

I didn't blame her. I could hardly believe myself.

I swallowed. "I've already proven it to your friends; what more can I do?"

She didn't hesitate. "Let me move into your pack. Into your home."

My eyes widened. "What?"

"I'm your future Luna, am I not?" she asked. "Sera is gone from your home; it is only right that I take my place."

A sour pit yawned open in my stomach, and I could feel myself recoiling. I could feel Ashar, too, curling back inside me like he couldn't bear the thought of what Celeste was suggesting.

But the doctor's warning pulsed like a brand against my conscience. She needed stability. She needed something to live for. I couldn't push her more than I'd already done.

My hesitation, my confusion, and guilt didn't matter right now.

All that mattered was keeping Celeste happy. Keeping her alive.

"Alright," I said softly, nodding once. "Let's do it."

Her fingers tightened around mine. A bright smile cut across her face like a shooting star.

Ashar howled inside me in protest, but I silenced him. I silenced everything.

SERAPHINA'S POV

The soreness in my limbs was nothing compared to the ache in my chest.

OTS training had never felt so long.

Every movement, every technique Maya corrected, echoed with fragments of this morning's altercation—Kieran's furious eyes, the way his body pressed mine against the wall, the pure unhinged rage in his voice when he warned me never to hit him again.

Even now, I felt his imprint like fingerprints on my skin.

I didn't tell Maya everything. Just enough. She noticed the way my strikes were off, how my breath kept catching, how my focus kept wavering.

"You're in your head, Sera," Maya said gently during a sparring break. "Come back to your body."

I nodded, swallowing hard.

"I know things have been messy lately. But you're not alone in this, babe. You never were."

Something about the way she said it, like she meant it down to the marrow, made my throat go tight.

After training, she flung a towel over her shoulder and nudged me with a grin. "Dinner? My place. I don't want you going back to that empty house with your thoughts."

"Yeah," I muttered. "Neither do I."

But it wasn't even the empty house I was avoiding; it was the memory I knew still lingered in my foyer.



She looped her arm through mine. “Come on, I’m making grilled salmon. You can rant, cry, or collapse—dealer’s choice.”

I gave her a small smile, grateful that there was someone who existed who cared this much about me.

Seeing as Lucian drove me to OTS after Kieran stormed out of my house in the morning, I carpooled with Maya to her house.

By the time we arrived, I felt lighter and was laughing at some hilarious story she was telling me about her college days.

But then, every ounce of mirth and amusement drained from my body as we stepped into her kitchen, and I saw Ethan setting the table like he belonged there.

I froze.

He glanced up and smiled. “Hey.”

“Hey?” I replied carefully, turning to Maya in question.

She gave me a sheepish smile that looked more like a grimace. "I did promise you a dinner date with my mate."